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EXAMINER

SPAHN, GAY

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3673

DATE MAILED: 07/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/796,463

Applicant(s)

WONG ET AL.

Examiner

Gay Ann Spahn

Art Unit

3673

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 January 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 12-14, 19, 23, 25-29, 32, 38, and 41-43 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: page 8, line 25, a space should be inserted between the first occurrence of the word "face" and the reference character "5A".

Appropriate correction is required.

The use of the trademark Velcro® has been noted in this application (on page 8, line 28). It should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology (i.e., such as "hook and loop fastener" for the trademark Velcro®).

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

Claim Objections

Claims 1, 2, 12-14, 19, 23, 25-29, 32, 38, and 41-43 are objected to because of the following minor informalities:

(1) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 1, line 3, the word "such" should be changed to --the--, line 6, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 11, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", line 12, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word "discharging",

Art Unit: 3673

line 14, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 15, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 18, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", line 19, the word "a" should be changed to --the-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "discharging", line 21, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 23, the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 24, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "transmitting", line 26, both occurrences of the word "those" should be changed to --the-- and the word --the- should be inserted after the word "discharging", line 27, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 29, the words "mat area" should be changed to --an area of the mat--, line 33, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "signal,", line 34, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word "or", line 35, the word --the-- should be inserted after the third occurrence of the word "or", line 37, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first and second occurrences of the word "and", and line 38, the word "such" should be changed to --the-- and the words --of the user-- should be inserted after the word "position";

(2) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 2, line 2, the word --the-- should be inserted after both the first and second occurrences of the word "and", line 3, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word "of", and line 4, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "of";

(3) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 12, line 3, the word "such" should be changed to --the-- and the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 6, the

Art Unit: 3673

first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 8, the word "exhibit" should be changed to --exhibits--, line 12, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 13, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word "receiving", line 14, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "of", line 16, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 17, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 20, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 21, the word "a" should be changed to --the-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "receiving" and the word "one" should be changed to --a second--, line 22, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "under" and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "of", line 23, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "under", line 24, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and" and the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 26, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "transmitting" and the word "those" should be changed to --the--, line 29, the words "mat area" should be changed to --an area of the mat-- and the third occurrence of the word "the" should be changed to --a--, line 30, the word "those" should be changed to --the--, line 32, the word --the- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and" and after the word "signal,", line 34, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "or", line 35, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word "or", line 36, the words "a fluid vent" should be changed to --one of the fluid vents-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 37, the word --the-- should be inserted after

Art Unit: 3673

the first occurrence of the word “and” and the word “such” should be changed to --the--, and line 38, the words --of the user-- should be inserted after the word “position”;

(4) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 13, line 2, the word --the-- should be inserted after both occurrences of the word “and”, line 3, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word “of”, and line 4, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “of”;

(5) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 14, line 1, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “and” and the word “vent” should be changed to --vents--;

(6) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 19, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word “or”;

(7) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 23, line 2, the word “a” should be changed to --the-- and the word “claims” should be changed to --claim--, and line 3, the word --claim-- should be inserted after the word “or” and the word --the-- should be inserted after both of the words “reservoir,” and “and”;

(8) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 25, line 1, “systems of claims 1 or 12” should be changed to --system of claim 1 or claim 12--;

(9) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 26, line 1, “systems of claims 1 or 12” should be changed to --system of claim 1 or claim 12--, line 4, the word --the-- should be inserted before the word “mat”;

(10) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 27, line 3, the word “such” should be changed to --the--, line 7, the first occurrence of the word “a” should be

Art Unit: 3673

changed to --the--, line 13, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word "receiving", line 14, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "of", line 16, the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 17, the second occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 20, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 21, the word "a" should be changed to --the-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "receiving" and the word "one" should be changed to --a second--, line 22, the word --the-- should be inserted both after the word "under" and after the word "of", line 23, the word --the-- should be inserted both after the word "under", line 24, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and" and the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 26, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "transmitting" and the word "those" should be changed to the word --the--, line 28, the word "a" should be changed to the word --the-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 30, the words "mat area" should be changed to the words --an area of the mat--, line 31, the second occurrence of the word "the" should be changed to the word "a", line 32, the word "those" should be changed to the word --the--, line 33, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", line 34, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "signal,", line 35, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word "or", line 36, the word --the-- should be inserted after the third occurrence of the word "or", line 37, the words "a fluid vent" should be changed to the words --the fluid vents-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 38, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", and line 39, the word "such" should

Art Unit: 3673

be changed to the word --the-- and the words --of the user-- should be inserted after the word "position";

(11) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 28, line 2, the word --the-- should be inserted after both the first and second occurrences of the word "and", line 3, the word --the-- should be inserted after the second occurrence of the word "of", and line 4, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "of";

(12) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 29, line 1, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and" and the word "vent" should be changed to --vents--;

(13) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 32, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word "or";

(14) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 38, line the word "such" should be changed to --the--, line 6, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 10, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", line 11, the word --a-- should be inserted after the word "discharging", line 13, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 14, the first occurrence of the word "a" should be changed to --the--, line 17, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word "and", line 18, the word "a" should be changed to --the-- and the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "discharging", line 20, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "and", line 22, the word "a" should be changed to the word --the--, line 23, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word "transmitting", line 24, the word "those" should be changed to --the-- and the

Art Unit: 3673

word --the-- should be inserted after the word “discharging”, line 28, the words “mat area” should be changed to the words --an area of the mat-- and the third occurrence of the word “the” should be changed to --a--, line 29, the word “those” should be changed to --the--, line 31, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “signal,”, line 33, the word --the-- should be inserted after the first occurrence of the word “or”, line 34, line 36, the word --the-- should be inserted after both the first and second occurrence of the word “and”, and line 37, the word “such” should be changed to the word --the-- and the words --of the user-- should be inserted after the word “position”;

(15) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 41, line 2, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “under”, and line 2, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “under”;

(16) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 42 line 1, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “under”; and

(17) for proper antecedent basis and/or grammar, claim 43, line 1, the word --the-- should be inserted after the word “under”.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-9, 11-20, 22, 25-33, and 35-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torbet et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0221261) in view of Chapman et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0182728).

As to claim 1, Torbet et al. disclose an adjustable mattress and pillow system comprising:

(a) a mattress (1₃) which adapts, based on a user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and in response to variation of such position (see page 18, first line of paragraph no. [0199] through page 19, last line of paragraph no. [0205]), to an optimum contour for support of a the user's body (35, 36), the mattress (1₃) comprising a mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) and a mattress bottom face (4-2), the mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) being covered in part by an electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) having a mat top outer face (4-1) for receiving and supporting a user's body (35, 36) and a mat bottom outer face (bottom surface of 22₃₋₂) in substantial contact with the mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆), the mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) comprising an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane (22₃₋₁ when sensors 44 are either embedded within layer 22₃₋₁ or between layers 22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂ - see page 10, paragraph [0116] wherein it states that "[d]ifferent vertical locations sensors 44 are acceptable" and "sensors 44 also can be located on or in any other members") which exhibits a decreasing electrical resistance when compressed and which covers in part the mat top outer face;

Art Unit: 3673

(b) one or more inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) located within the mattress (1₃), the compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) being positioned between the top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) and bottom face (4-2) of the mattress (1₃) and connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) for receiving and discharging fluid (air, water or any other suitable liquid or gas - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines);

(c) a pillow (20 or 86, 86') which is positioned on the top face of the mattress (1₃), the pillow (20 or 86, 86') comprising a top face for supporting a user's head and neck (35, 36) and a bottom face in contact with the mattress top face;

(e) a pumping/control unit (83 in Fig. 35) under microprocessor control (74) and positioned remotely from the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86'), the microprocessor control (74) being in electrical contact with the mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) for receiving and processing electrical signals from the mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂), the pumping/control unit (83) being connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) for transmitting fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and for discharging fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) to the reservoir (39₃₅), wherein when the user (35, 36) reclines upon the mattress (1₃) and pillow (86, 86'), the microprocessor control (74):

(1) receives electrical input signals from the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) which vary in relationship to the width of mat area compressed by the

Art Unit: 3673

user (35, 36) and the pressure exerted on the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) as the position of the user (35, 36) shifts;

(2) processes the input signals pursuant to preprogrammed instructions (algorithm store 76); and

(3) transmits an output signal to the pumping/control unit (83), and wherein depending upon the output signal, fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) is either transmitted from the reservoir (39₃₅) by the pumping/control unit (83), to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments, or is discharged from one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments by the pumping/control unit (83) to the reservoir (39₃₅) to optimize the contours of the mattress (1₃) relative to the position of the user (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86') and in response to variation of such position.

Torbet et al. fail to explicitly disclose that their pillow:

- adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- has one or more inflatable pillow compartments:
 - located within the pillow;
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow;
 - connected to a fluid reservoir for receiving and discharging fluid; and
 - connected to a pumping/control unit and a fluid reservoir for transmitting fluid from the reservoir to one or more of the pillow compartments and for discharging fluid from one or more of those pillow compartments to the reservoir.

Chapman et al. disclose an adjustable inflatable pad (1 - including head section zone 4):

- which adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- which has one or more inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12 in Figs. 2-4):
 - located within the pad/pillow (1);
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow (1);
 - connected to a fluid reservoir (pump 6) for receiving and discharging fluid (air); and
 - connected to a pumping/control unit (50) and a fluid reservoir (6) for transmitting fluid (air) from the reservoir to one or more of the pillow compartments (11, 12) and for discharging fluid (air) from one or more of the pillow compartments (11, 12) to the reservoir (6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. to include the inflation control system of Chapman et al. in order to provide a pillow that adjusts by inflation or deflation of the chambers therein dependent upon the changing position of the user on the bed similar to the adjustment of the mattress.

Chapman et al. appear to disclose the adjustable inflatable pad for use as a pad covering the head, torso, upper leg, and heel sections of a user. However, to have formed the Chapman et al. pad of any particular size including a pillow size, thus allowing for any particular use around or under any given section of a user including the head, while also saving on costs and material, as well as place, or utilize, such smaller

Art Unit: 3673

head pad upon the adjustable mattress of Torbet et al., thus providing Torbet et al. with a pillow pad for the head of a user, as is customarily employed by anyone sleeping or lying upon a mattress, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made as taught by Chapman et al. and as it is widely held that where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, In *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

As to claim 2, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is connected to the fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) by a plurality of conduits (9₃-1, 9₃-2, 9₃-3, 9₃-4) and the transmission of fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from the reservoir to the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11,12), and discharge of fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) to the reservoir (39₃₅), is regulated by transmission of the output signal to both the pumping/control unit (83) and conduit valves (37₃₅) which open and close in response to the output signal.

As to claim 3, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 2 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the conduits are flexible pipes or hoses (9₃-1, 9₃-2, 9₃-3, 9₃-4), and that the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) comprises electrically conductive elastomers sandwiched in between the mat top inner face and the mat bottom inner face.

As to claim 4, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system (1) of claim 3 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is a pump.

As to claim 5, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system (1) of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) is affixed to the mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆).

As to claim 6, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a liquid (water or any other suitable liquid - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 7, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a gas (air or any other suitable gas - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 8, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 4 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a liquid (water or any other suitable liquid - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 9, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pillow (86, 86') is affixed to the mattress top face.

As to claim 11, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the mattress (1₃) comprises a cushioning material (foam members 11-1 through 11-7; non-woven quilted batting 3; and bottom member 14) that envelops the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4).

As to claim 12, Torbet et al. disclose an adjustable mattress and pillow system comprising:

(a) a mattress (1₃) which adapts, based on a user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and in response to variation of such position, to an optimum contour for support of a user's body (35, 36), the mattress (1₃) comprising a mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) and a mattress bottom face (4-2), the mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) being substantially covered by an electrically conductive sensing mat (top members 22₃-1, 22₃-2) having a mat top outer

Art Unit: 3673

face (top surface of top member 22₃-1) for receiving and supporting a user's body (35, 36) and a mat bottom outer face (bottom surface of top member 22₃-2) in substantial contact with the mattress top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆), the electrically conductive sensing mat (top members 22₃-1, 22₃-2) comprising an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane which exhibit a decreasing electrical resistance when compressed and which substantially covers the mat top outer face;

(b) one or more inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) located within the mattress (1₃), the compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) being

(1) positioned between the top face (top surfaces of foam members 11₄ and 11₆) and bottom face (4-2) of the mattress (1₃),

(2) connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) for receiving fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid - see page 5, last four lines of paragraph no. [0070]), and

(3) provided with at least one fluid vent (37₃₅) under microprocessor (74) control for discharge of fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid);

(c) a pillow (20 or 86, 86') which is positioned on the top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) of the mattress (1₃), the pillow (20 or 86, 86') comprising a top face for supporting a user's head and neck (35, 36) and a bottom face which is substantially in contact with the mat top face;

(e) a pumping/control unit (83 in Fig. 35) under microprocessor control (74) and positioned remotely from the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86'), the

Art Unit: 3673

pumping/control unit (83) being connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) for transmitting fluid (air, water, etc.) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to one or more of the compartments inflatable mattress (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4), wherein the microprocessor control (74)

(1) is in electrical contact with the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) for receiving and processing electrical signals from the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) which vary in relationship to the width of mat area compressed by the user (35, 36) and the pressure exerted on the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) as the position of the user (35, 36) shifts,

(2) processes those signals pursuant to preprogrammed instructions (76), and

(3) transmits an output signal to the pumping/control unit (83) and fluid vents (37₃₅), and wherein, on the basis of the output signal, fluid (air, water, etc.) is either transmitted from the reservoir (39₃₅) by the pumping/control unit (83) to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments, or is discharged from one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments by a fluid vent (37₃₅) to optimize the contours of the mattress (1₃) relative to the user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86') and in response to variation of such position.

Torbet et al. fail to explicitly disclose that their pillow:

- adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- has one or more inflatable pillow compartments:
 - located within the pillow;

- positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow;
- connected to a fluid reservoir for receiving fluid; and
- provided with at least one fluid vent under microprocessor control for discharge of fluid;
- connected to the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control and the fluid reservoir for transmitting fluid from the reservoir to one or more of the inflatable pillow compartments.

Chapman et al. disclose an adjustable inflatable pad (1 - including head section zone 4):

- which adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- which has one or more inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12):
 - located within the pad/pillow (1);
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow;
 - connected to a fluid reservoir (6) for receiving fluid (air); and
 - provided with at least one fluid vent (7) under microprocessor control for discharge of fluid (air);
 - being connected to the pumping/control unit (50) under microprocessor control and the fluid reservoir (6) for transmitting fluid (air) from the reservoir (6) to one or more of the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. to include the inflation control system of Chapman et al. in order to provide a pillow that

adjusts by inflation or deflation of the chambers therein dependent upon the changing position of the user on the bed similar to the adjustment of the mattress.

Chapman et al. appear to disclose the adjustable inflatable pad for use as a pad covering the head, torso, upper leg, and heel sections of a user. However, to have formed the Chapman et al. pad of any particular size including a pillow size, thus allowing for any particular use around or under any given section of a user including the head, while also saving on costs and material, as well as place, or utilize, such smaller head pad upon the adjustable mattress of Torbet et al., thus providing Torbet et al. with a pillow pad for the head of a user, as is customarily employed by anyone sleeping or lying upon a mattress, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made as taught by Chapman et al. and as it is widely held that where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, In *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

As to claim 13, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is connected to the fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) by a plurality of

Art Unit: 3673

intake conduits (9₃-1, 9₃-2, 9₃-3, 9₃-4), and the transmission of fluid (air, water, etc.) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) and the discharge of fluid (air, water, etc.) from the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) through the vents (37₃₅), is regulated by transmission of the output signal to both the pumping/control unit (83) and intake conduit valves and fluid vent valves (37₃₅) which open and close in response to the output signal.

As to claim 14, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. disclose the system of claim 13 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the intake conduits (9₃-1, 9₃-2, 9₃-3, 9₃-4) and fluid vent (37₃₅) are flexible pipes or hoses and wherein the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) comprises electrically conductive elastomers (68₃₅) sandwiched in between the electrically conductive sensing mat top inner face (bottom surface of 22₃-1) and the electrically conductive sensing mat bottom inner face (top surface of 22₃-2).

As to claim 15, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 14 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is a pump.

As to claim 16, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as disclosed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the electrically

Art Unit: 3673

conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) is affixed to the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6).

As to claim 17, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a liquid (water or any other suitable liquid - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 18, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a gas (air or any other suitable gas - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 19, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 14 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a liquid or gas (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 20, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pillow (86, 86') is affixed to the mattress top face (see Fig. 22).

As to claim 22, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the mattress (1₃)

Art Unit: 3673

comprises a cushioning material (foam members 11-1 through 11-7; non-woven quilted batting 3; and bottom member 14) that envelops the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4).

As to claim 25, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of either claim 1 or claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is under the control of a control device (99) that incorporates the microprocessor (74) and functions as a mass flow controller in which the microprocessor (74) has sensing (44₃₅, 68₃₅) and signal processing (78) elements in communication with valve drives that operate valves (37₃₅) to control the mass flow rate of fluid (air, water, etc.) to and from the mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the pillow compartments (11, 12).

As to claim 26, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of either claim 1 or claim 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the microprocessor (74) is preprogrammed (76) with a set point established by an external input supplied by the user (35, 36) or a third party in order to fix a desired fluid flow rate, and hence mattress and pillow contour, in response to certain signals transmitted from the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2).

As to claim 27, Torbet et al. disclose a method of supporting a body element comprising:

(a) providing an adjustable mattress and pillow system wherein a mattress (1₃) adapts, based on a user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and in response to variation of such position, to an optimum contour for support of a the user's body (35, 36), the mattress (1₃) comprising a mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) and a mattress bottom face (4-2), the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) being covered in part by an electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) having a mat top outer face (top surface of 22₃₋₁) for receiving and supporting a user's body (35, 36) and a mat bottom outer face (bottom surface of 22₃₋₂) in substantial contact with the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6), the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) comprising an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane which exhibits a decreasing electrical resistance when compressed and which substantially covers the mat top outer face (top surface of 22₃₋₁);

(b) providing one or more inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) located within the mattress (1₃), the compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) being

(1) positioned between the top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) and bottom face (4-2) of the mattress (1₃)

(2) connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) for receiving fluid (air, water, or other suitable liquid or gas - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines), and

(3) provided with at least one fluid vent (37₃₅) under microprocessor control (74) for discharge of fluid (air, water, etc.);

(c) providing a pillow (20 or 86, 86') which is positioned on the top face of the mattress (1₃), the pillow (20 or 86, 86') comprising a top face for supporting a user's head and neck (35, 36) and a bottom face which is substantially in contact with the mat top face;

(e) providing a pumping/control unit (83) under microprocessor control (74) and positioned remotely from the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86'), the pumping/control unit (83) being connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) for transmitting fluid (air, water, etc.) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) wherein a user (35, 36) is positioned upon the mattress top face and pillow (20 or 86, 86') and the microprocessor control (74)

(1) is in electrical contact with the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) for receiving and processing electrical signals from the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) which vary in relationship to the width of mat area compressed by the user (35, 36) and the pressure exerted on the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) as the position of the user (35, 36) shifts,

(2) processes those signals pursuant to preprogrammed instructions (76) and,

(3) transmits an output signal to the pumping/control unit (83) and fluid vents (37₃₅), and wherein, on the basis of the output signal, fluid (air, water, etc.) is either transmitted from the reservoir (39₃₅) by the pumping/control unit (83) to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments, or is discharged from one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments by a fluid vent

Art Unit: 3673

(37₃₅) to optimize the contours of the mattress (1₃) and pillow relative to the user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86') and in response to variation of such position.

Torbet et al. fail to explicitly disclose that their pillow:

- adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- has one or more inflatable pillow compartments:
 - located within the pillow;
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow;
 - connected to a fluid reservoir for receiving fluid; and
 - provided with at least one fluid vent under microprocessor control for discharge of fluid;
- being connected to the pumping/control unit and the fluid reservoir for transmitting fluid from the reservoir for transmitting fluid from the reservoir to one of more of the inflatable pillow compartments.

Chapman et al. disclose an adjustable inflatable pad (1 - including head section zone 4):

- which adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- which has one or more inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12):
 - located within the pad/pillow (1);
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow (1);
 - connected to a fluid reservoir (6) for receiving fluid (air); and

- provided with at least one fluid vent (7) under microprocessor control for discharge of fluid (air);
- being connected to the pumping/control unit (50) and the fluid reservoir (6) for transmitting fluid (air) from the reservoir (6) to one or more of the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. to include the inflation control system of Chapman et al. in order to provide a pillow that adjusts by inflation or deflation of the chambers therein dependent upon the changing position of the user on the bed similar to the adjustment of the mattress.

Chapman et al. appear to disclose the adjustable inflatable pad for use as a pad covering the head, torso, upper leg, and heel sections of a user. However, to have formed the Chapman et al. pad of any particular size including a pillow size, thus allowing for any particular use around or under any given section of a user including the head, while also saving on costs and material, as well as place, or utilize, such smaller head pad upon the adjustable mattress of Torbet et al., thus providing Torbet et al. with a pillow pad for the head of a user, as is customarily employed by anyone sleeping or lying upon a mattress, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made as taught by Chapman et al. and as it is widely held that where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device,

Art Unit: 3673

the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, In *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

As to claim 28, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is connected to the fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) by a plurality of intake conduits (9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 9-4), and the transmission of fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) and the discharge of fluid (air, water or any other suitable gas or liquid) from the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12) through the vents, is regulated by transmission of the output signal to both the pumping/control unit (83) and intake conduit valves and fluid vent valves (37₃₅) which open and close in response to the output signal.

As to claim 29, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 28 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the intake conduits (9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 9-4) and fluid vent (37₃₅) are flexible pipes or hoses, and wherein the mat (22₃₋₁, 22₃₋₂) comprises electrically conductive elastomers (68₃₅) sandwiched in

Art Unit: 3673

between the mat top inner face (bottom surface of 22₃-1) and the mat bottom inner face (top surface of 22₃-2).

As to claim 30, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as disclosed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pumping/control unit (83) is a pump.

As to claim 31, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as disclosed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the electrically conductive sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) is affixed to the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6).

As to claim 32, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the fluid is a liquid (water or any other suitable liquid) or gas (air or any other suitable gas - see page 5, paragraph no. [0070], last four lines).

As to claim 33, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the pillow (86, 86') is affixed to the mattress top face (see Fig. 22).

As to claim 35, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose that the mattress (1₃) comprises a cushioning material (foam members 11-1 through 11-7; non-woven quilted batting 3; and bottom member 14) the envelopes the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4).

As to claim 36, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose the pumping/control unit (83) is under the control of a control device that incorporates the microprocessor (74) and functions as a mass flow controller in which the microprocessor (74) has sensing (sensors 68₃₅, 44₃₅) and signal processing elements (computational unit 78) in communication with valve drives that operate valves (37₃₅) to control the mass flow rate of fluid (air, water, etc.) to and from the mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and the pillow compartments (11, 12).

As to claim 37, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. further disclose the microprocessor (74) is preprogrammed (76) with a set point established by an external input supplied by the user (35, 36) or a third party in order to fix a desired fluid flow rate, and hence mattress (1₃) and pillow contour, in response to certain signals transmitted from the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2).

As to claim 38, Torbet et al. disclose an adjustable mattress and pillow system comprising:

(a) a mattress (1₃) which adapts, based on a user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and in response to variation of such position, to an optimum contour for support of a the user's body (35, 36), the mattress (1₃) comprising a mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) and a mattress bottom face (4-2), the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) being covered in part by a sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) having a mat top outer face (top surface of 22₃-1) for receiving and supporting a user's body (35, 36) and a mat bottom outer face (bottom surface of 22₃-2) in substantial contact with the mattress top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6), the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) comprising an elastomeric sensing membrane which covers in part the mat top outer face and which, when compressed, transmits a sensing signal;

(b) one or more inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) located within the mattress (1₃), the compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) being positioned between the top face (top surfaces of 11-4 and 11-6) and bottom face (4-2) of the mattress (1₃) and connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) for receiving or discharging fluid (air, water, etc.);

(c) a pillow (20 or 86, 86') which is positioned on the top face of the mattress (1₃), the pillow comprising a top face for supporting a user's head and neck (35, 36) and a bottom face which is substantially in contact with the mattress top face;

(e) a pumping/control unit (83) under microprocessor control (74) and positioned remotely from the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86'), the microprocessor control

Art Unit: 3673

(74) being in electrical contact with the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) for receiving and processing sensing signals from the mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) into electrical signals, the pumping/control unit (83) being connected to a fluid reservoir (39₃₅) and the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) for transmitting fluid (air, water, etc.) from the reservoir (39₃₅) to one or more of those compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) and for discharging fluid (air, water, etc.) from one or more of those compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) to the reservoir (39₃₅), wherein, when the user (35, 36) reclines upon the mattress (1₃) and pillow (20 or 86, 86'), the microprocessor control (74)

(1) receives and processes into electrical signals input sensing signals from the sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) which vary in relationship to the width of mat area compressed by the user (35, 36) and the pressure exerted on the sensing mat (22₃-1, 22₃-2) as the position of the user (35, 36) shifts,

(2) processes those signals pursuant to preprogrammed instructions (76) and,

(3) transmits an output signal to the pumping/control unit (83), and wherein on the basis of the output signal, fluid (air, water, etc.) is either transmitted from the reservoir (39₃₅) by the pumping/ control unit (83) to one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments, or is discharged from one or more of the inflatable mattress compartments (12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-4) or inflatable pillow compartments by the pumping/control unit (83) to the reservoir (39₃₅) to optimize the contours of the mattress (1₃) relative to the user's position (35, 36) on the mattress (1₃) and pillow and in response to variation of such position.

Torbet et al. fail to explicitly disclose that their pillow:

Art Unit: 3673

- adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- has one or more inflatable pillow compartments:
 - located within the pillow;
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow;
 - connected to a fluid reservoir for receiving and discharging fluid; and
 - connected to a pumping/control unit and the fluid reservoir for

transmitting fluid from the reservoir to one or more of the pillow compartments and for discharging fluid from one or more of the pillow compartments to the reservoir.

Chapman et al. disclose an adjustable inflatable pad (1 - including head section zone 4):

- which adapts to an optimum contour for support of a user's head and neck, and
- which has one or more inflatable pillow compartments (11, 12 in Figs. 2-4):
 - located within the pad/pillow (1);
 - positioned between the top face and bottom face of the pillow (1);
 - connected to a fluid reservoir (pump 6) for receiving and discharging fluid

(air); and

- connected to a pumping/control unit (50) and a fluid reservoir (6) for transmitting fluid (air) from the reservoir to one or more of the pillow compartments (11, 12) and for discharging fluid (air) from one or more of those pillow compartments (11, 12) to the reservoir (6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. to include the inflation control system of Chapman et al. in order to provide a pillow that adjusts by inflation or deflation of the chambers therein dependent upon the changing position of the user on the bed similar to the adjustment of the mattress.

Chapman et al. appear to disclose the adjustable inflatable pad for use as a pad covering the head, torso, upper leg, and heel sections of a user. However, to have formed the Chapman et al. pad of any particular size including a pillow size, thus allowing for any particular use around or under any given section of a user including the head, while also saving on costs and material, as well as place, or utilize, such smaller head pad upon the adjustable mattress of Torbet et al., thus providing Torbet et al. with a pillow pad for the head of a user, as is customarily employed by anyone sleeping or lying upon a mattress, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made as taught by Chapman et al. and as it is widely held that where the only difference between the prior art and the claims was a recitation of relative dimensions of the claimed device and a device having the claimed relative dimensions would not perform differently than the prior art device, the claimed device was not patentably distinct from the prior art device, In *Gardner v. TEC Systems, Inc.*, 725 F.2d 1338, 220 USPQ 777 (Fed. Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 830, 225 USPQ 232 (1984).

As to claim 39, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 38 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the sensing mat utilizes either an infrared sensor, an ultrasonic detector, a digital image scanner, an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane, or electrically conductive silicon rubber to transmit input sensing signals from the sensing mat to the microprocessor control.

However, it is well settled that “[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results.” (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).) Thus, since any one of an infrared sensor, ultrasonic detector, digital image scanner, electrically conductive elastomeric membrane, or electrically conductive silicon rubber do the same thing as the sensors of Torbet et al. in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the use of any one of an infrared sensor, an ultrasonic detector, a digital image scanner, an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane, or electrically conductive silicon rubber to transmit input sensing signals from the sensing mat to the microprocessor control would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely changing the type of sensor used to perform the same function is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Art Unit: 3673

Further, Applicants have shown no criticality as to why the sensing mat must utilize either an infrared sensor, an ultrasonic detector, a digital image scanner, an electrically conductive elastomeric membrane, or electrically conductive silicon rubber to transmit input sensing signals from the sensing mat to the microprocessor control (i.e., why an equivalent system or structure would not work just as well).

As to claim 40, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 38 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the mat comprises an induction system combined with a piece of metal foil situated under the user, and wherein displacement of the metal foil modifies a self-induction coefficient of an induction coil, thereby shifting the resonant frequency of an LC circuit away from the tuning frequency of an oscillator and damping the signal delivered to an amplifier by the oscillator to ensure that the signal is correctly processed and appropriately monitored.

However, it is well settled that “[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results.” (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).)

Thus, since using an induction system combined with a piece of metal foil situated under the user would do the same thing as the sensors of Torbet et al. in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the use the induction system and

Art Unit: 3673

metal foil would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely changing the type of sensor used to perform the same function is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Further, Applicants have not shown any criticality as to why the mat must comprises an induction system combined with a piece of metal foil situated under the user, and wherein displacement of the metal foil modifies a self-induction coefficient of an induction coil, thereby shifting the resonant frequency of an LC circuit away from the tuning frequency of an oscillator and damping the signal delivered to an amplifier by the oscillator to ensure that the signal is correctly processed and appropriately monitored (i.e., why an equivalent system or structure would not work just as well).

As to claim 41, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 38 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the mat comprises a capacitive array which is interconnected with the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control, and wherein the a pumping/control unit under microprocessor control supplies to the capacitive array a suitable oscillator derived driver current and concurrently senses capacitance value changes within the capacitive array induced through dielectric shifts within the array brought about by the proximity or absence thereof of the user's body mass.

However, it is well settled that "[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no

Art Unit: 3673

invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results." (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).)

Thus, since using a capacitive array would do the same thing as the sensors of Torbet et al. in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the use the capacitive array would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely changing the type of sensor used to perform the same function is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Further, Applicants have not shown any criticality as to why the mat must comprises a capacitive array which is interconnected with the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control, and wherein the a pumping/control unit under microprocessor control supplies to the capacitive array a suitable oscillator derived driver current and concurrently senses capacitance value changes within the capacitive array induced through dielectric shifts within the array brought about by the proximity or absence thereof of the user's body mass (i.e., why an equivalent system or structure would not work just as well).

As to claim 42, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 38 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control comprises

a power supply, a driver/sensor circuit, a comparator/calibration logic circuit, a system interconnection integrity circuit and an alarm generation circuit.

However, it is well settled that “[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results.” (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).)

Thus, since using a pumping/control unit under microprocessor control comprising a power supply, a driver/sensor circuit, a comparator/calibration logic circuit, a system interconnection integrity circuit and an alarm generation circuit would do the same thing as the sensor system of Torbet et al. in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the use the power supply, driver/sensor circuit, comparator/calibration logic circuit, system interconnection integrity circuit and alarm generation circuit would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely changing the type of sensor used to perform the same function is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Further, Applicants have not shown any criticality as to why the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control must comprise a power supply, a driver/sensor circuit, a comparator/calibration logic circuit, a system interconnection integrity circuit and an alarm generation circuit (i.e., why an equivalent system or structure would not work just as well).

As to claim 43, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 42 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control comprises a nurse call relay circuit for interconnection to a facilities nurse call system.

However, it is well settled that “[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results.” (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).) Thus, since providing a nurse call relay circuit would not at all affect the functioning of adjustable mattress and pillow system and the adjustable mattress and pillow system of the combination of Torbet et al. and Chapman et al. would function in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the nurse call relay circuit would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely adding optional structure that would not affect the performance of the invention is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Further, Applicants have not shown any criticality as to why the pumping/control unit under microprocessor control must comprise a nurse call relay circuit for interconnection to a facilities nurse call system.

As to claim 44, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 42 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the system further comprises a proximity induced non-compressive dielectric shift sensing mechanism.

However, it is well settled that "[g]enerally, it is not invention to change size or degree of thing or of any feature or function of machine or manufacture; there is no invention where change does not involve different concept, purposes, or objects, but amounts to doing the same thing substantially the same way with better results." (See *Hobbs v. Wisconsin Power and Light Company et al.*, 115 USPQ 371 (CA 1957).) Thus, since using a proximity induced non-compressive dielectric shift sensing mechanism would do the same thing as the sensor system of Torbet et al. in substantially the same way with substantially the same results, the use proximity induced non-compressive dielectric shift sensing mechanism would have constituted a further obvious expedient to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since it is well founded that merely changing the type of sensor used to perform the same function is not unobvious. (See *Brunswick Corporation v. Champion Spark Plug Company*, 216 USPQ 1 (CA 7 1982).

Further, Applicants have not shown any criticality as to why the system must comprises a proximity induced non-compressive dielectric shift sensing mechanism (i.e., why an equivalent system or structure would not work just as well).

Claims 10, 21 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Richardson (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0014819).

As to claim 10, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 1 as discussed above.

However, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the pillow comprises a cushioning material that envelops the inflatable pillow compartments.

Richardson (see Figs. 2 and 3) discloses a pillow (10) having an inflatable pillow compartment (12) enveloped by a cushioning material (14).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. by providing a cushioning material to envelop the inflatable pillow compartments as taught by Richardson in order to provide a more soft and comfortable sleeping surface for a users head and neck.

As to claim 21, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the system of claim 12 as discussed above.

However, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the pillow comprises a cushioning material that envelops the inflatable pillow compartments.

Richardson (see Figs. 2 and 3) discloses a pillow (10) having an inflatable pillow compartment (12) enveloped by a cushioning material (14).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. by providing a cushioning material to envelop the inflatable pillow compartments as taught by Richardson in order to provide a more soft and comfortable sleeping surface for a users head and neck.

As to claim 34, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses the method of claim 27 as discussed above.

However, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the pillow comprises a cushioning material that envelops the inflatable pillow compartments.

Richardson (see Figs. 2 and 3) discloses a pillow (10) having an inflatable pillow compartment (12) enveloped by a cushioning material (14).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. by providing a cushioning material to envelop the inflatable pillow compartments as taught by Richardson in order to provide a more soft and comfortable sleeping surface for a users head and neck.

Claims 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Torbet et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0221261) in view of Chapman et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0182728), as applied to claims 1 or claim 12 above, and further in view of Bartlett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,353,950).

As to claim 23, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. discloses an apparatus for supporting a subject (35, 36) in a variable, substantially prone positions (see Figs. 13 and 14 of Torbet et al.), comprising a mattress (1₃) and pillow (86, 86') system (1) of claims 1 or 12 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. also disclose that the mattress (1₃) and pillow (86, 86') system (1) is supported by a frame (21).

However, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. fails to explicitly disclose that the fluid reservoir, pumping/control units, and microprocessor control are also supported by the frame.

Bartlett et al. disclose that the control unit (38) is supported on the bed frame (11) and the control unit (38) includes fluid reservoir (blower 47), pumping/control units (blower relay 48), and microprocessor control (processor unit 42).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the adjustable mattress and pillow system of Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. by supporting the control unit on the bed frame as taught by Bartlett et al. in order to provide a compact system so that components so not get lost or disconnected.

As to claim 24, Torbet et al. in view of Chapman et al. and Bartlett et al. discloses the apparatus of claim 23 as discussed above, and Torbet et al. also disclose that the apparatus is any one of a bed (bed (1) in Fig. 1), a stretcher, an examining table, or an operating table.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0208848 to Flick et al. discloses a self-adjusting cushioning device. U.S. Patent No. 6,421,858 to Cuérel

Art Unit: 3673

discloses mattresses or cushions. U.S. Patent No. 2002/0178504 to Yung discloses a body sleeping position detection for pillow height control that minimizes stress on neck and shoulder. U.S. Patent No. 6,668,408 to Ferrand et al. discloses a patient care system. U.S. Patent No. 6,154,907 to Cinquin discloses a pneumatic cushion having individually deformable cells. U.S. Patent No. 6,119,291 to Osborne et al. discloses a percussion and vibration therapy apparatus. U.S. Patent No. 6,108,843 to Suzuki et al. discloses an air bed. U.S. Patent No. 6,047,424 to Osborne et al. discloses a bed having modular therapy devices. U.S. Patent No. 5,966,763 to Thomas et al. discloses a surface pad system for a surgical table. U.S. Patent No. 5,963,997 to Hagopian discloses a low air loss patient support system providing active feedback pressure sensing and correction capabilities for use as a bed mattress and wheelchair seating system. U.S. Patent No. 5,794,289 to Wortman et al. discloses a mattress for relieving pressure ulcers. U.S. Patent No. 5,630,238 to Weismiller et al. discloses a bed with a plurality of air therapy devices, having control modules and an electrical communication network. U.S. Patent No. 5,170,364 to Gross et al. discloses a feedback system for load bearing surface. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0083550 to Graebe, Jr. discloses an air cushion control system. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0178503 to Reeder et al. discloses a mattress structure.

Art Unit: 3673

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gay Ann Spahn whose telephone number is (571)-272-7731. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 8:30 am to 7:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather C. Shackelford can be reached on (571)-272-7049. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

^{GAS}
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June 26, 2005


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